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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/534,940	11/01/2005	Taek-Jin Kim	KIW-001US	1670

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EXAMINER	
CHEUNG, VICTOR	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
3714	

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/534,940	KIM, TAEK-JIN	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	VICTOR CHEUNG	3714	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE *3* MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-20* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-20* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *13 May 2005* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *05/13/2005; 07/27/2006*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

As seen in the Specification submitted on 05/13/2005, on page 1, line 35, the sentence reads as "When the number of users exceeds the hardware capacity, a system with a plurality of servers is chosen by", after which the sentence is left incomplete and the first line of page 2 begins a new sentence.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-3, 6, 9-10, 12-13, and 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sasaki (Japanese Patent Application Laid-open No. 2000-285064; with English machine translation provided by Japanese Patent Office at http://www.ipdl.inpit.go.jp/homepg_e.ipdl) in view of Ushiro et al. (US Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0008713).

Re Claims 1, 9, 12: Sasaki discloses a system and method, as part of a computer game provided at a terminal (Paragraphs 2-5), for providing on-line games by connecting a plurality of online game servers (Paragraph 11), of which each server is providing an independent virtual world (Paragraphs 6-7; user A on server A17_1 and user B on server B17_2), the method comprising the steps of (a) allowing an access from a user (Paragraph 39; the user inputs the character and server identification for the virtual space sharing system); (b) receiving information on said user's user character from a server which stores information on the user characters of the user (Paragraph 53; the character selected by the user is displayed); and providing on-line games between a plurality of users' user characters (Paragraph 11).

However, Sasaki does not specifically disclose the steps of (c) repeating steps (a) and (b) for a plurality of users.

Ushiro et al. teach a system and method including loading a plurality of different user characters into an online game between the plurality of characters (Paragraph 83).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to repeat the steps for a plurality of users, thereby providing the plurality of users the option to use their specified characters.

Re Claims 2, 10, 13: Sasaki discloses said step (b) comprising the steps of receiving an input from said user for selecting a server which stores said user's user character among said plurality of servers; and receiving information on the user character from said selected server (Paragraphs 39, 53).

Re Claim 3: Sasaki discloses said step (c) comprising the steps of translating user information of said user who is allowed to access; translating a server which stores characters of said user who is allowed to access, based on said extracted user information; and receiving user information from said translated server (Paragraphs 58-63).

Re Claims 6, 17, 18: Sasaki discloses a plurality of virtual spaces (Fig. 1, Servers A,B, …, n).

However, Sasaki does not specifically disclose allowing the plurality of users to select one of a plurality of games.

Ushiro et al. teach allowing the plurality of users to select one of a plurality of games (Fig. 19; Paragraphs 230-233).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to allow the plurality of users to select one of a plurality of games, thus achieving the predictable result of allowing the user to participate in a desired game with the user's character.

4. Claims 4, 7, 11, 14-16, and 19-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sasaki and Ushiro et al., as applied to claims 1-3, 9-10, and 12-13 above, and further in view of Easley et al. (US Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0142842).

Re Claims 4, 11, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20: Sasaki does not specifically disclose the step (d) comprising the step of receiving an input from said plurality of users for selecting one of a plurality of channels which are classified according to user characters' abilities.

Easley et al. teach a system and method for providing multiplayer game functionality including receiving input from a plurality of users for selecting one of a plurality of channels which are classified according to user characters' abilities (Paragraph 54).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to have players select one of a plurality of channels classified according to user character's abilities, thereby allowing players the ability to play with other players at a similar level.

Re Claim 7: Sasaki does not specifically disclose the step of forming teams from the plurality of users.

Easley et al. teach forming a team in a multiplayer game (Paragraph 57).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form teams from the plurality of users, thus achieving the predictable result of dividing the players into groups of players with common goals or traits.

5. Claims 5 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sasaki, Ushiro et al., and Easley et al., as applied to claims 4 and 7 above, and further in view of Peterson et al. (US Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0027639).

Re Claims 5, 8: As discussed above, Sasaki, as modified by Ushiro et al. and Easley et al., discloses channels and team games.

However, Sasaki does not specifically disclose imposing a certain penalty on user characters of a user if the user inputs a selection of a channel lower than his ability or imposing a certain

penalty on a team which has superior average fighting power of user characters, to balance fighting powers of the teams.

Peterson et al. teach a system and method of playing games of skill in a networked environment, including imposing penalties on a user character if the user selects a channel lower than his ability and balancing the character with the skill of the opposing character (Paragraphs 50, 53).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to impose penalties, thereby facilitating an even playing field between players of differing skill. By imposing penalties on each match of player characters, the teams formed are also balanced.

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to VICTOR CHEUNG whose telephone number is (571)270-1349. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri, 9-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter Vo can be reached on (571) 272-4690. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Dmitry Suhol/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3714

/V. C./
Examiner, Art Unit 3714